UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1994/308
18 March 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 17 MARCH 1994 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSIONS OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon instructions from our Governments, we express our dismay at part of the presidential statement on Maglaj (S/1994/PRST/11), which we deem unfounded and potentially harmful to the ongoing peace process.

The overall message of the statement accurately condemns the Serbian aggression in the area of Maglaj. None the less, the part of the statement referring to the Bosnian Croats was incorrect and might have compromised the other positive elements of this statement. We wish to indicate that our sources on the ground, as well as other international elements consulted, have a very different understanding of the situation than that provided by the representative of the Secretary-General at the informal consultations on 14 March 1994 that preceded the adoption of the aforementioned statement and which was the basis for this unfortunate reference.

Since the signature of the Bosnian-Croat preliminary agreements in Washington on 1 March 1994 (S/1994/255), no action of the forces of Croatian Defence Council against the forces of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or vice versa, has been recorded by our respective Governments. In the same period of time, all humanitarian aid convoys have been given free passage through the Croat-held parts of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina en route to Muslim-majority enclaves and settlements, totalling 103 convoys and 9,300 tons of humanitarian aid since 1 March.

The town of Maglaj is completely surrounded by Serb forces only, and has been subjected to constant Serbian shelling since 17 January 1994. The Bosnian Croat forces are positioned within the enclave. The only Croat defensive forces that are still within the 15-mile radius around Maglaj are themselves encircled and threatened by the Serb forces in the Croatian enclave of Zepce. Zepce, a town on the Doboj-Maglaj road, is itself, as well as Maglaj, in dire need of humanitarian assistance and efficient protection from the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). Both our Governments would favour that the entire area be declared a safe-area.

North of Maglaj, in the area of the Usora valley, Croat defensive forces are joining in a valiant effort with Bosnian government defensive forces, in order to help besieged Maglaj to the best of their limited capacities.

We would kindly request your assistance in distributing this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ivan MISIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of the
Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina
to the United Nations

(Signed) Vladimir DROBNJAK
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